

The technology of e-readers may have made reading more convenient and accessible, but it does raise the question whether the nature of digitized media helps or inhibits readers to remember what they read. The interaction with an e-reader is very impersonal: One just has to mindlessly tap on the side of a screen to “flip” the page, and repeat this simple task over and over again. Along with the impersonal nature, research does show that people are just remembering less of what they read due to the instant gratification of information finding our internet gives us.

Because of these problems, I want to bring it back to the basics: Physical books. I want to see how we can improve the information and insight we learn as we read books. First, the act of reading a physical book is much more intimate than reading an E-book. Page turns have to be done carefully or to wrinkle and damage a page. The way one holds a physical book may vary, such as the two-handed approach or the one hand on the binding, but nevertheless, there are more ways to hold a physical book than an e-book.

My belief is that the physical interactions we have with physical objects will allow us to develop a form of emotional attachment to the object, and thus curate improved memory. Thus, how can I enhance the book-reading process to do this?

My creative project idea is to create a “Memory-mark” by which a user can document the page numbers that he or she has read after a reading session. After a reading session, the user turns dials on a bookmark to indicate the starting and ending page of her reading session. Additionally, he/she can choose what colors these numbers are. Upon closing the book, the numbers will light up.

This idea compels me because I believe people too easily forget what they do, and that’s usually because of a lack of reflection. Reflection does require effort, which many people in today’s society fail to do and appreciate. Increased interaction with the bookmark, trying to find what page I had started on, and the physical nature of holding a book are all factors of what I believe will make reading a more personal activity, and thereby improve our memory.